

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, GE, UR
SUBJECT: SED POLITBURO ASSESSES BREZHNEV-HONECKER MEETING.

1. THE SED POLITBURO ON AUGUST 24 CONSIDERED SECRETARY GENERAL HONECKER'S REPORT OF HIS AUGUST 19 MEETING WITH BREZHNEV IN CRIMEA AND ISSUED A STATEMENT THROUGH EAST GERMAN NEWS SERVICE ADN ON THE RESULTS. AS IN THE INITIAL AUGUST 20 ADN REPORT OF THE MEETING CARRIED UNDER BANNER HEADLINES IN ALL EAST BERLIN PAPERS, THE POLITBURO STATEMENT EMPHASISES FULL AGREEMENT BETWEEN BREZHNEV AND HONECKER ON ALL ISSUES. IT NOTES THAT THE TWO LEADERS DISCUSSED A NUMBER OF DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLICY QUESTIONS INCLUDING BILATERAL RELATIONS IN

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LIGHT OF THE OCTOBER 1975 TREATY.

2. THE POLITBURO STATEMENT REITERATES THE FIRM INTENTION OF BOTH COUNTRIES TO RESIST ALL ASSAULTS ON THE SOVEREIGN RIGHTS AND BORDERS OF THE GDR. IT NOTES THAT BOTH LEADERSHIPS VIEW SUCH ATTEMPTS BY "CERTAIN CIRCLES" TO BE CONTRARY TO THE SPIRIT OF HELSINKI, BUT REFRAINS FROM MENTIONING THE FRG OR RECENT BORDER INCIDENTS.

3. THE POLITBURO STATEMENT GOES FURTHER THAN THE AUGUST 20 ADN REPORT ON THE MEETING, WHICH MENTIONED ONLY THAT BOTH SIDES HAD DISCUSSED QUESTIONS IMPORTANT FOR DETENTE. IT STATES THAT THE GDR WILL CONTINUE TO BE GUIDED BY THE SEARCH FOR "OBJECTIVE AND MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL RELTIONS" WITH THE CAPITALIST STATES, INCLUDING THE FRG.

4. COMMENT: EAST GERMAN MEDIA TREATMENT OF MEETINGS DESIGNED TO SHOW THAT GDR HAS FULL BACKING OF BREZHNEV IN ITS RECENT ALTERCATIONS WITH THE FRG. TO underscore THIS POINT, GDR MEDIA HAVE CARRIED THREE COMMENTARIES FROM SOVIET MEDIA DURING THE AST WEEK ATTACKING ALL ATTEMPTS TO UNDERMINE GDR SOVEREIGNTY AND PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR THE GDR'S RECENT STOPPAGE OF BUSES ALONG THE BERLIN AUTOBAHN. AS IN THE AUGUST 24 POLITBURO STATEMENT, HOWEVER, THE GDR HAS CONSISTENTLY GONE ON RECORD IN FAVOR OF CONTINUED NORMALIZATION IN GDR-FRG RELATIONS. IN THIS FASHION, THE GDR APPARENTLY SEEKS TO DAMPEN RECENT CONTROVERSY ARISING OVER BORDER INCIDENTS AND ON THE TRANSIT ROUTES.

5. MENTION OF THE OCTOBER 1975 SOVIET-GDR TREATY DURING HONECKER'S MEETING WITH BREZHNEV INDICATES THAT THE TWO SIDES PROBABLY DISCUSSED HOW TO MARK THE TREATY'S FIRST ANNIVERSARY, WHICH WILL FALL ON THE GDR'S 27TH ANNIVERSARY OCTOBER 7.

6. WE NOTE ONE PARTICULARLY INTRIGUING SENTENCE IN THE POLITBURO STATEMENT WHICH REPORTS THAT "NECESSARY MEASURES" WERE INITIATED PRESUMABLY BY THE SED POLITBURO IN CONNECTION WITH DETERMINATIONS AGREED UPON AT THE BREZHNEV-HONECKER MEETING IN REGARD TO BILATERAL RELATIONS, THE WARSAW PACT

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AND CEMA. A RUMOR HAS RECENTLY MADE THE ROUNDS IN THE GDR THAT MILITARY SERVICE WILL SOON BE EXTENDED FROM 18 MONTHS TO 2 YEARS. THIS COULD WELL HAVE BEEN ONE MEASURE ADOPTED BY THE POLITBURO IN ITS AUGUST 24 MEETING, PARTICULARLY IN LIGHT OF REFERENCES TO THE WARSAW PACT IN THE POLITBURO STATEMENT. COOPER

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